

## Kabir Lahartara- The Land Where Embodiment of Truth Descended

The ancient city of Kashi is situated on the banks of holy river Ganges in today's Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. With the passage of time the city grew geographically and came to be known as Varanasi, the nomenclature derived from the name of rivers Varuna and Assi passing through the city. The ancient city of Kashi now lies situated within the limits of the city Varanasi. Lahartara pond six centuries back lay on the outskirts of Kashi.

More than six centuries back may be not too known, lying serenely in the gargantuan shadows of the *ghats* of Kashi, the very hub of Hinduism, and the rising crescent of Islam in India, Lahartara was destined to play the stage for an event that would in times following lay bare bigotry and falsehood permeating the social and religious life of masses. Lahartara was chosen to welcome the embodiment of truth and love. That divine occurrence was to usher in a period of realistic approach towards religion and spiritualism.

In the pre-dawn hours of a Monday in the month of June 1398 (Full moon of the Jaisth month of 1455 Vikram Era) a beam of light descended upon a lotus flower in Lahartara and transformed into a child. Legend has it that Swami Asthananda, disciple of Swami Ramananda, who was meditating on the banks of Lahartara was witness to this celestial event. It was from here that a childless couple Niru and Nima, weaver by profession, took the child under their care and who later came to be known to the world as Kabir- a *guru* to Hindus and a *peer* to the followers of Islam. From this day every grain of the soil of Lahartara and every ripple of the pond is blessed. On this auspicious day Lahartara became the starting point of a movement which challenged the well dug-in materialistic approach to knowing self and God. The beam of light that descended upon Lahartara pond that day was nothing but a streak of hopes illuminated tearing through the darkness of ignorance that shrouded humanity and its soul and kept it aloof from knowing its true purpose and nature. Sadguru Kabir's message to humanity simple and clear that in order to know self and realise God of your own understanding nothing intervenes between the soul and its love.

*Mo ko kahan dhunde bande, main toh tere paas mein*

*Naa teerath mein, naa moorat mein, naa ekant niwas mein*

*Naa main deval naa main masjid, naa kaabe kailaas mein*

*Naa main kouna kriyaa karam mein, nahin yog vairaag mein*

*Khoji ho to turate milaihe pal bhar ki talaas mein*

*Kahyen Kabir suno bhaai saadho main toh hu vishwas mein*

( O seeker, where dost thou seek Me ?

Kabir Lahartara

Lo! I am beside thee.

I am neither in pilgrimage nor in idol or solitude.

I am neither in temple nor in mosque: I am neither in Kaaba nor in Kailash:

Neither am I in rites and ceremonies, nor in Yoga and renunciation.

If thou art a true seeker, thou shalt at once see Me : thou shalt meet Me in a moment of time.

Kabir says, O Sadhu I am in your faith.)

The banks of Lahartara beckoned and its ripples reached out to him. In the year 1948 CE, five and half centuries after this event, Panth Shri Hajur Uditnam Saheb, yet not anointed as the third spiritual head of Acharya Gaddi Kabir Dharmasthan Kharsia, stood on the banks of Lahartara with a heavy heart, mourning the neglect of the symbol of start of the great march, by Sadguru Kabir Saheb, of self-realisation and emancipation of human soul from the yoke of blind faith and misdirected source of true happiness. Lahartara pond, made holy by the touch of Sadguru Kabir Saheb's life, had receded from people's sight, its water turned turbid and its banks being encroached upon by the ever increasing rise in population. Its state literally reflected the state of the soul of the society, which was once stirred to rationalism and reform by Sadguru Kabir Saheb, which now once again had crept under the shroud of ignorance and bigotry. Then and there Hajur Uditnam Saheb resolved to save Lahartara pond from oblivion for the generations to come. A herculean task he undertook, having scant resources He travelled the length and breadth of the country to exhort the believers of Sadguru Kabir Saheb to lend hand in saving Lahartara. His efforts bore fruit, and in the year 1967 CE on the day of *Jaisth Poornima* He, in the presence of large gathering of Kabirpanthis, unfurled the flag of Satyanaam. His dream that Lahartara be developed into a place where a true seeker on the path of shown by Sadguru Kabir Saheb be able to spend some spiritual moment surrounded by the divine vibration left by Sadguru Kabir started to take shape. His whole life and soul was devoted towards this task and He continues to live in every grain of soil of Lahartara and is inseparable from His Beloved. Panth Shri Hajur Uditnaam Saheb lie buried there.

Today at the holy site of Lahartara there is a *Smarak* (Sadguru Kabir Prakatyadham) commemorating Sadguru Kabir Saheb's appearance on sweltering summer of *Jaishth* of certainly responding to cry of suffering souls to show them the true path to bliss permanent. Close to the *Smarak* there is an *ashram*, Shri Kabir Baag Ashram, having residential facilities for saints, students and for pilgrims. Both the *Smarak* and the *ashram* is managed under Sadguru Kabir Dharmasthan Kharsia Gaddi. All the loved ones of Sadguru Kabir Saheb are welcomed and taken care of during their spiritual sojourn Lahartara.

Kabir Lahartara

*Aaya hai so jayega, raja rank fakir,*

*Ek singhasan charhi chale, ek bandhe janjeer.*

(Whoever is born, be it a king, pauper or a fakir will one day go, die. But some get the throne, are blessed and some are taken away chained)

Saheb Bandagi.